



A Different Kind of Democracy

Reimagining Civic Participation

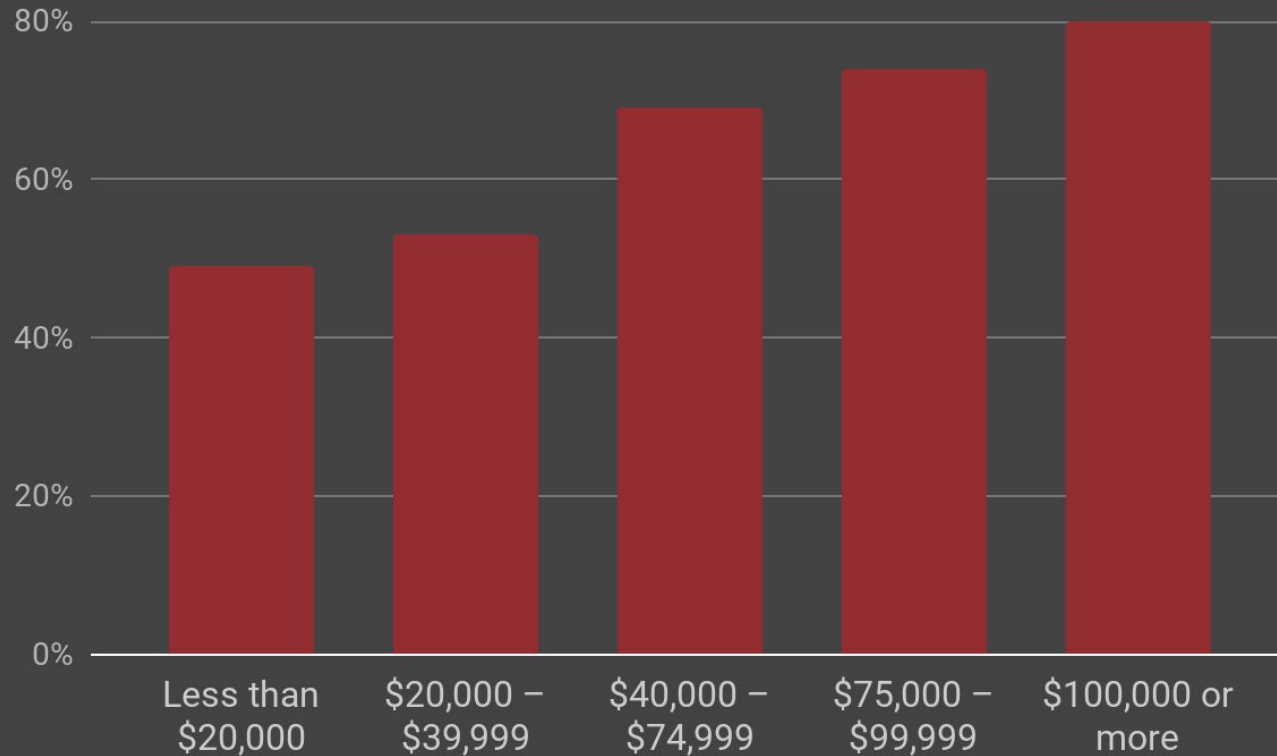
Linn Davis

Program Co-Director



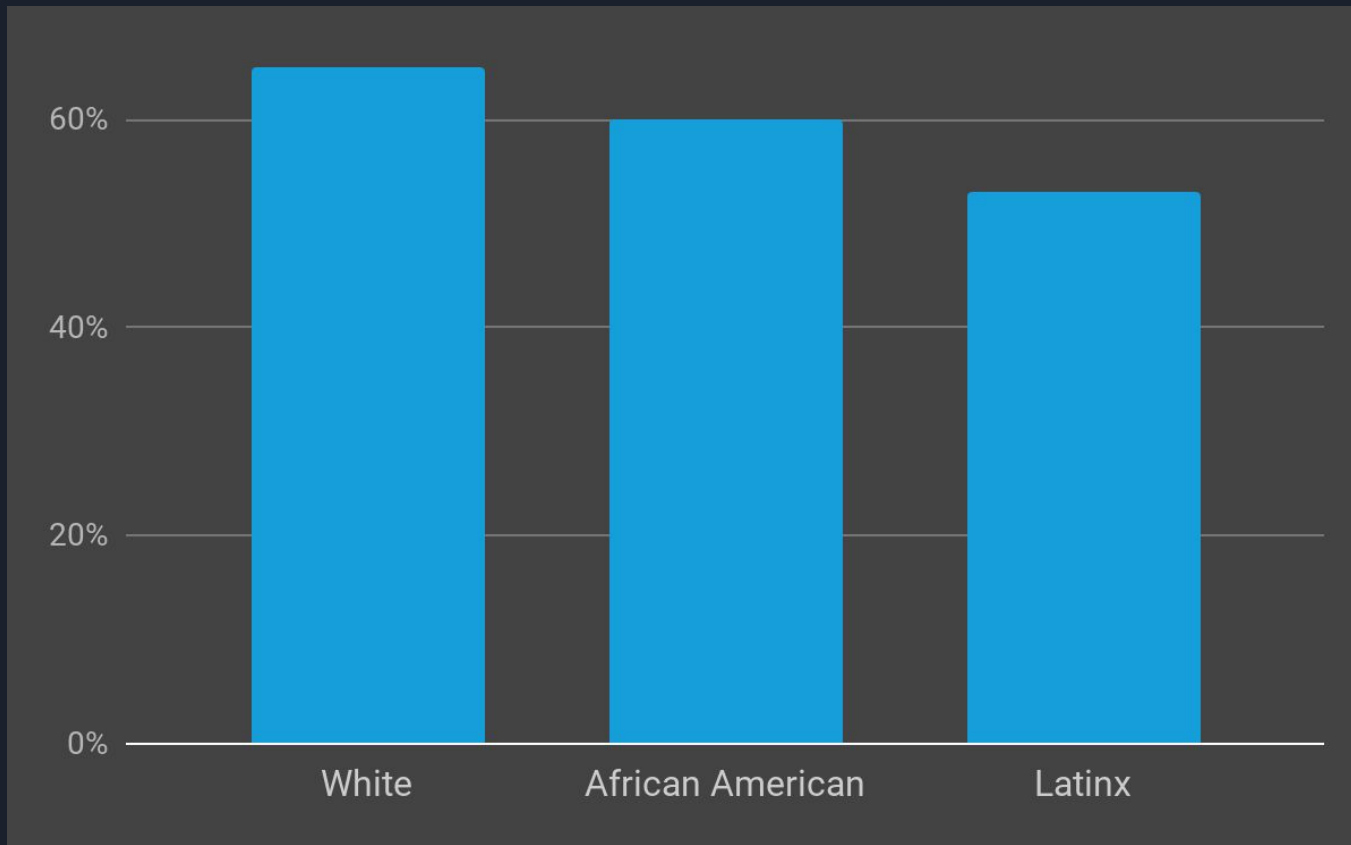
Why?





Rates of participation in civic & political activities

(% of US adults who took part in at least one civic/political activity in the past 12 months)



Rates of participation in civic & political activities

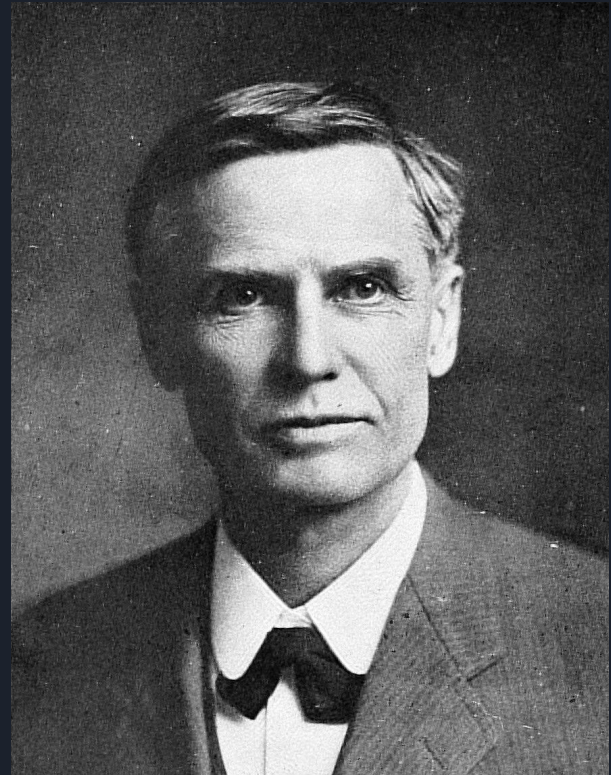
(% of US adults who took part in at least one civic/political activity in the past 12 months)

“We had tools to do almost anything with in the blacksmith shop

Why [could we not] invent legislative implements to help people govern themselves:

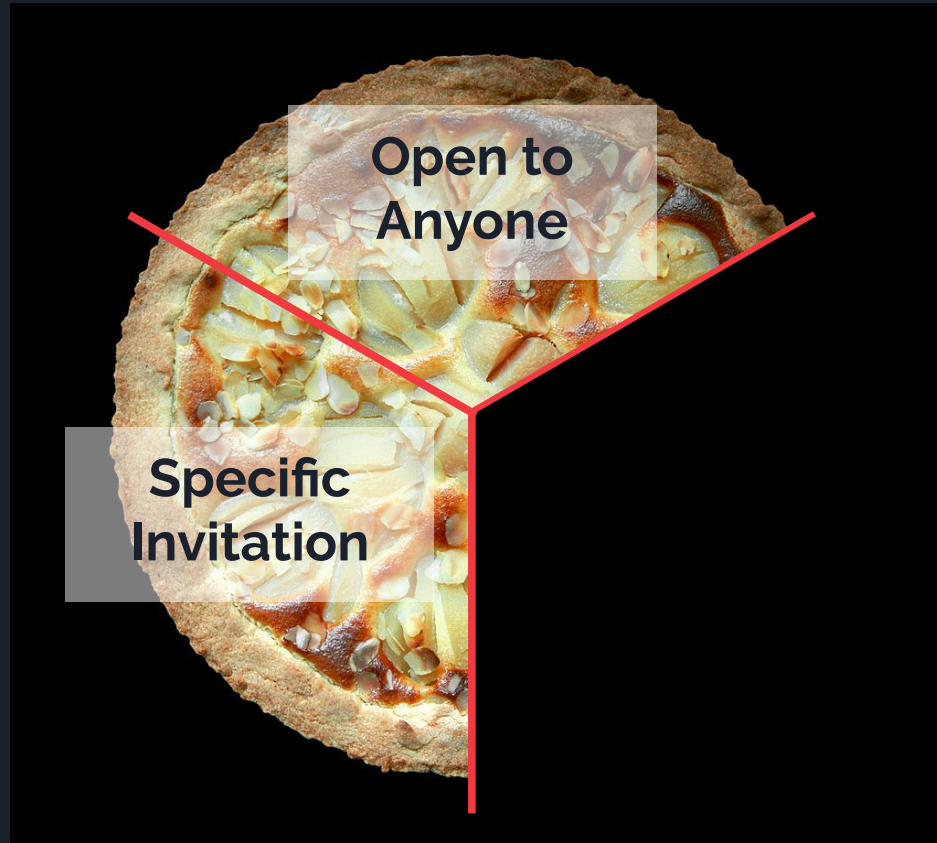
Why had we no tool makers for democracy?

—William U'Ren

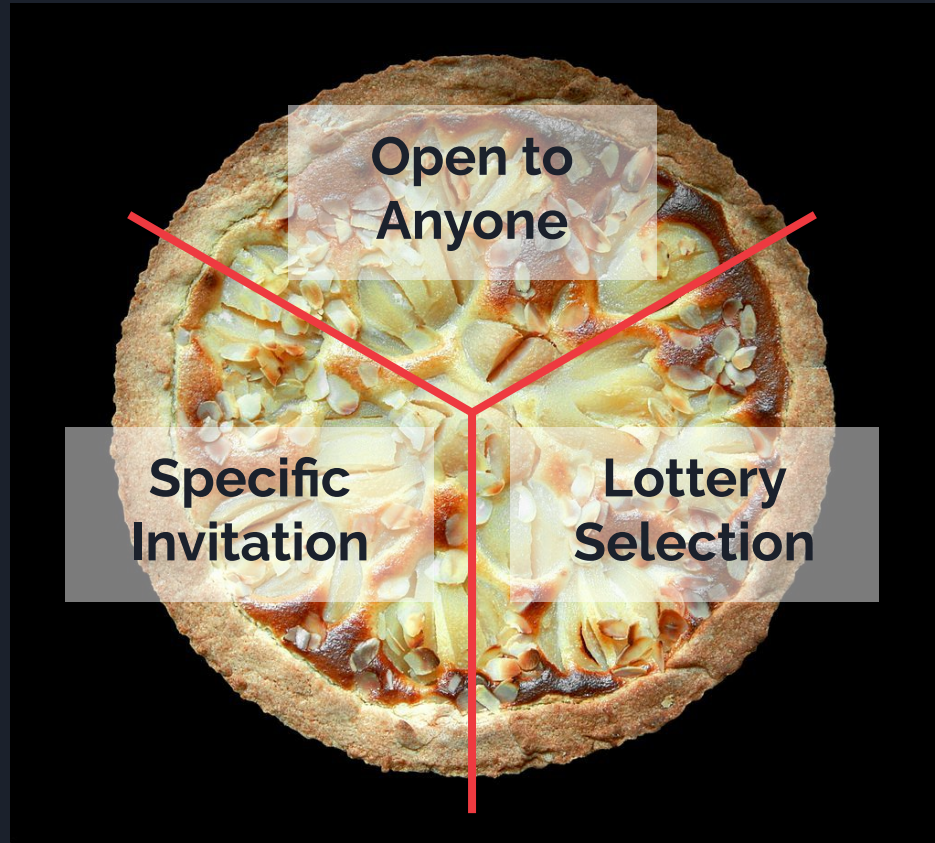


The Context





The Democracy Pie



The Democracy Pie



Open to Anyone

e.g., surveys, hearings, voting

- + Anyone! (at least in theory)
- Same individuals, same kinds of folks, "thin," non-deliberative



Specific Invitation

e.g., stakeholders, outreach to marginalized communities

- + Can be targeted & specialized
- Often same individuals, often a more top-down orientation



Lottery Selection

e.g., lottery-selected Panels

- + Guarantees new & diverse folks, in-depth deliberation, Panelist-led
- Limited participants, takes time

Better metaphor: *more* Democracy Pies!

A New Approach to Democracy



Core Principles:

Representation

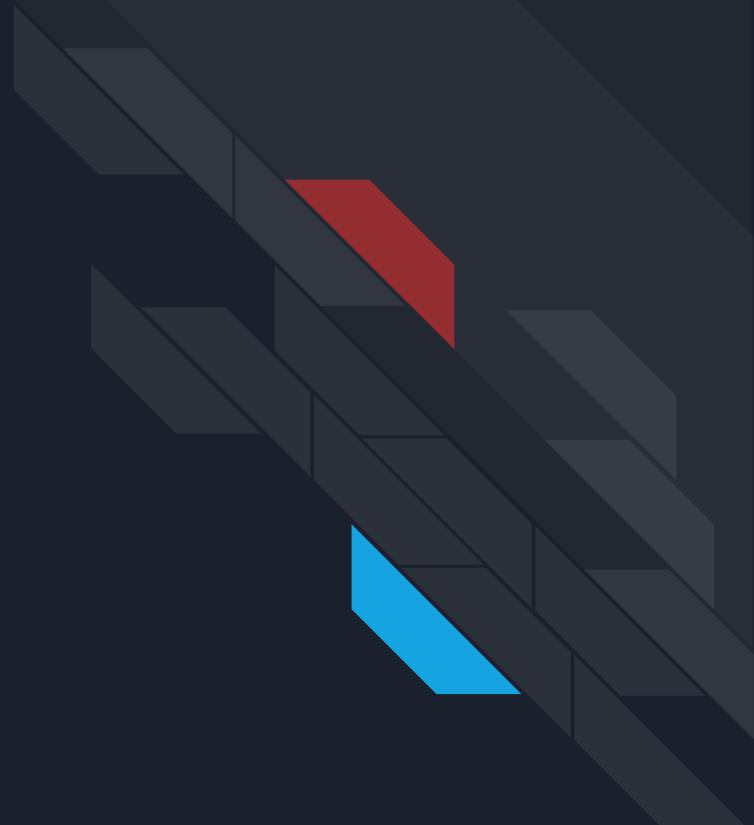
New individuals, different types of folks,
reflects the local area, considers equity

Resources

Stipend to Panelists, all expenses paid,
professional facilitation, outside expertise

Reciprocal trust

Staff ⇌ Panel, Panel does 100% its own
work, feedback loops, indep. evaluation





Democratic Lottery + Deliberation

The People

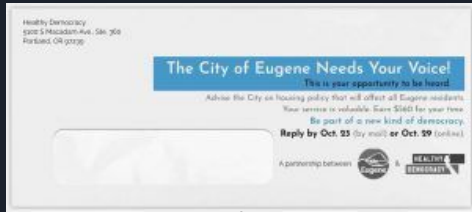
- Randomly selected – new voices
- Reflective of the public – a microcosm
- Panelists paid
- Result: inherent legitimacy

The Process

- Highly deliberative
- Tightly structured, iterative process
- Product-oriented
- Transparent & public
- Result: efficient process & high quality solutions

The Process





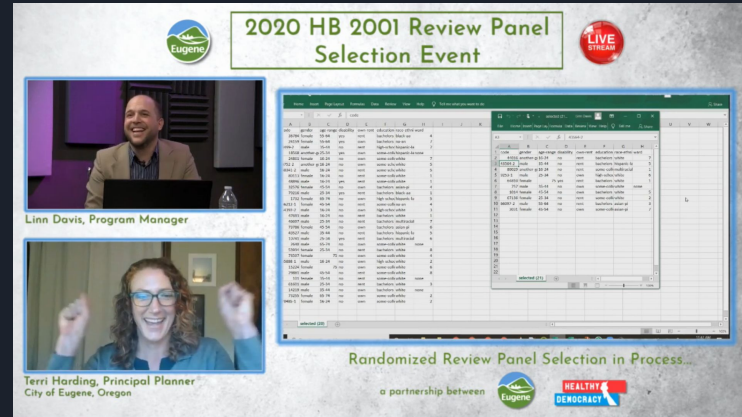
✉ Mailings sent to
5-10,000 randomly
selected addresses

📧 ~3% of recipients
respond, including
demographic info

🎲 Democratic Lottery
in public: random *and*
representative

📁 Selected Panelists
are supported with
logistics & materials


Lottery-Selection Process

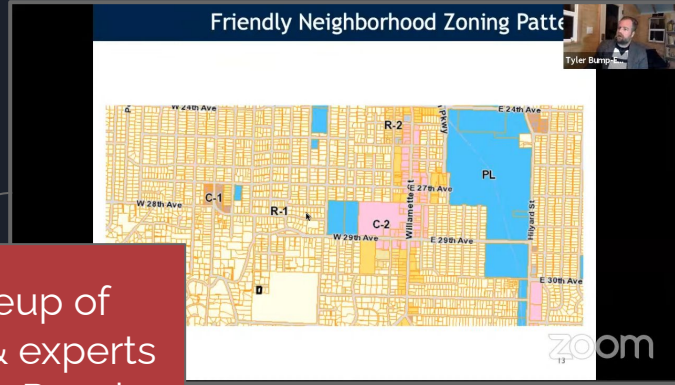


Throughout
the Process



 Publicity about
the Panel


 Indep.
evaluation &
observation


 Diverse lineup of
stakeholders & experts
presents to the Panel



 Panelists deliberate
on the issue & select
additional presenters

  Small
group work continues,
largely away from
staff/public

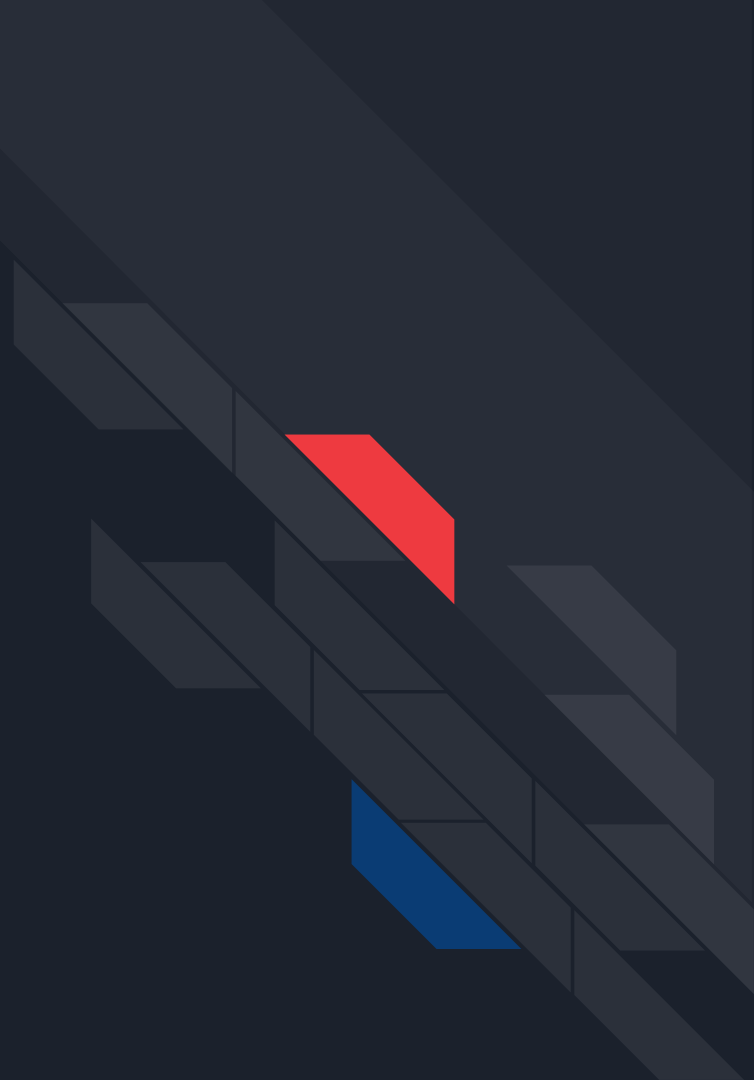
 Panel prioritizes
recommendations,
drafts & edits

 Panel presents its
work & follows through
with advocacy for it

Deliberative Process

City of Eugene Review Panel on Housing

Nov. 2020 - April 2021

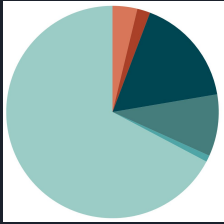




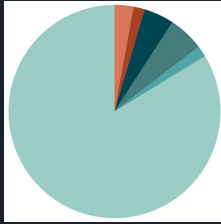
Eugene in One (Virtual) Room

Eugene Review Panel Selection

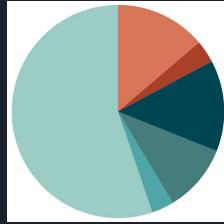
General
Population



Who
Replied to
the Mailing



Who Was
Lottery-
Selected



● Asian / Pacific Islander ● Black / African American ● Hispanic / Latina/o
● Multiracial ● Native American / Alaska Native ● White

Selected: 30 Panelists (plus alts.)
After 5 months: 28 Panelists

Representative on:

- Geographic Location
- Age
- Race & Ethnicity
- Gender
- Experience of Disability
- Educational Attainment
- Renter/Homeowner



Process Overview

Fall 2020: Guiding Principles

- Panel heard from 20+ stakeholders and experts
 - Most selected by the Panel itself, from a list
- Panel drafted and prioritized Guiding Principles

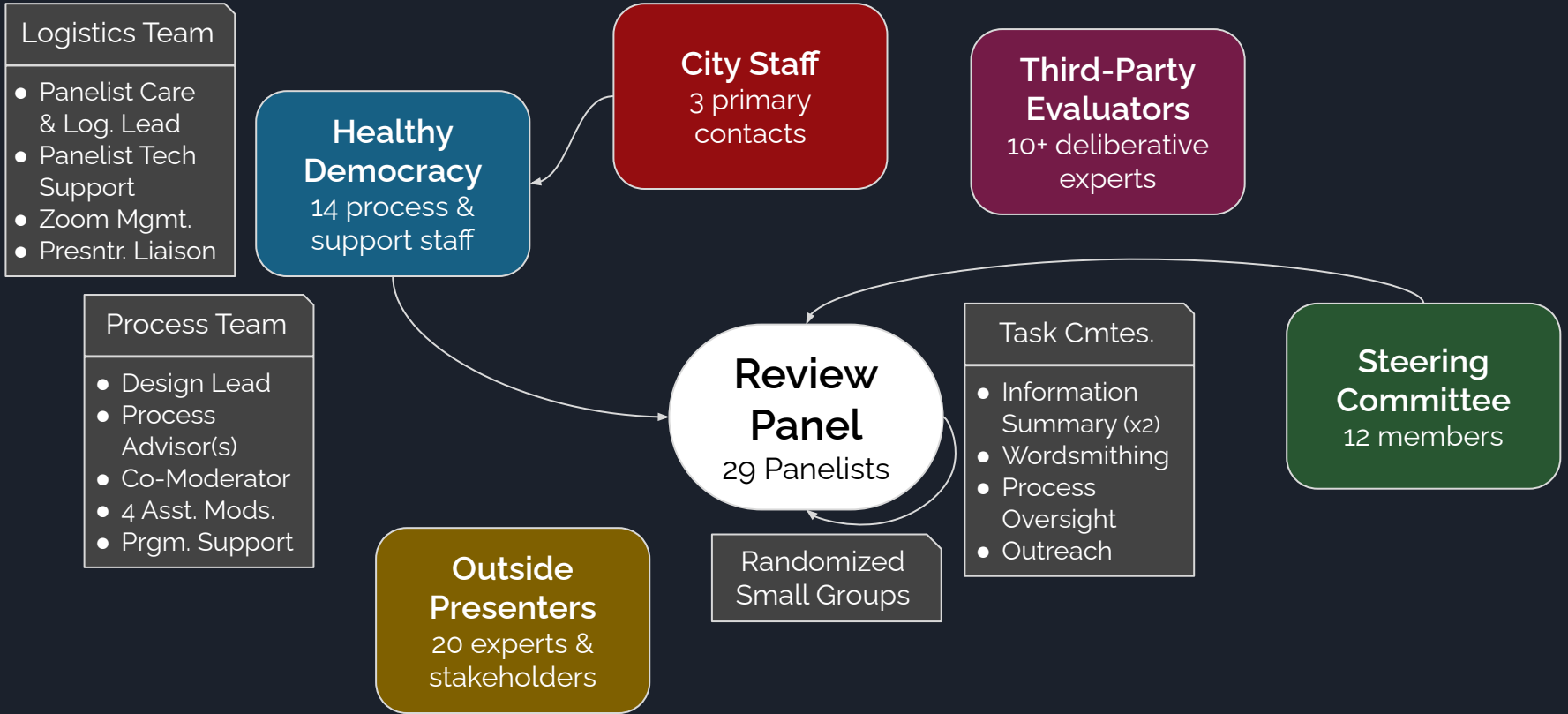
Spring 2021: Review the City's Work

Two feedback loops:

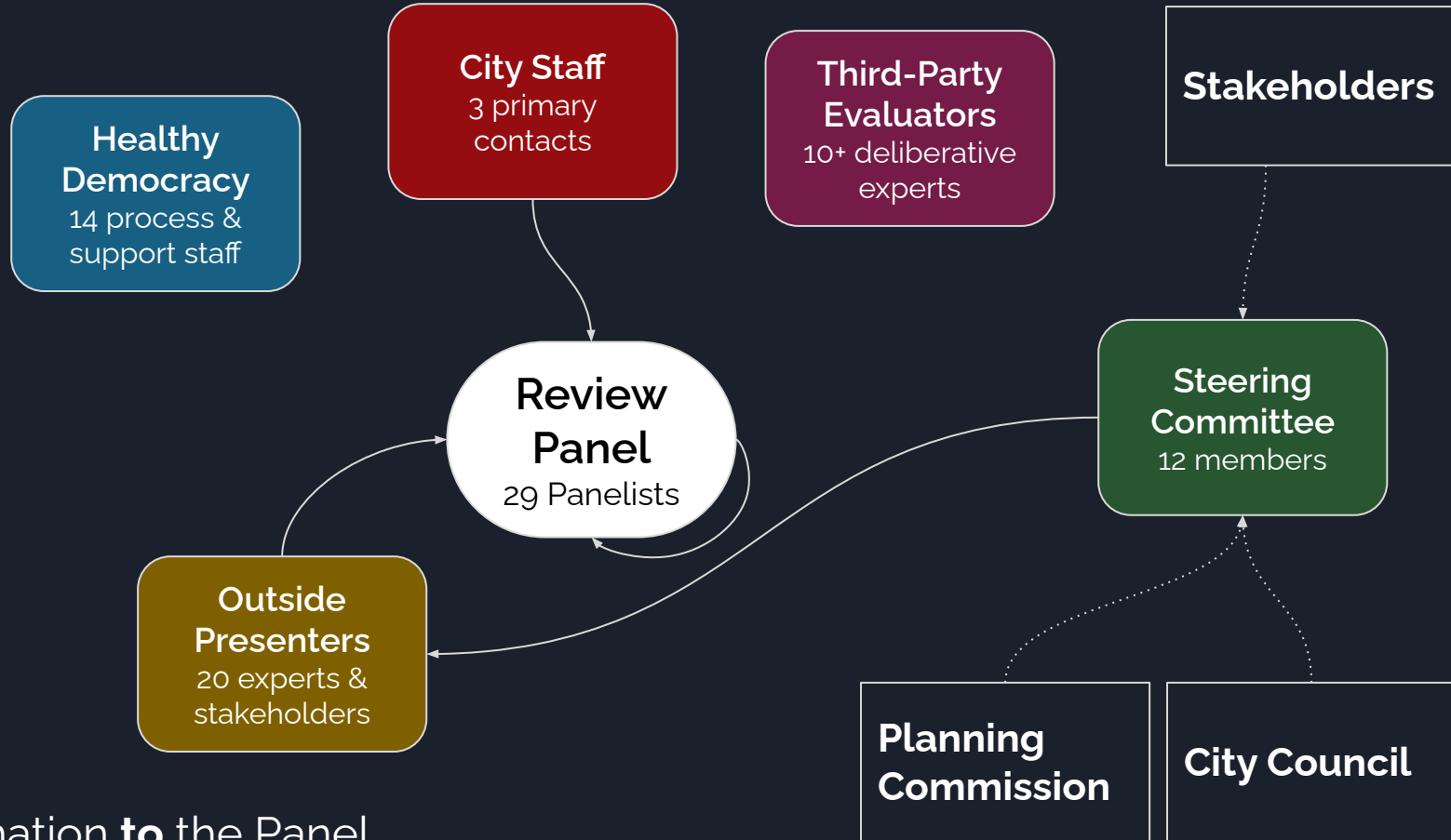
1. Panel reviewed code concepts & crafted general public engagement recs.
2. Panel reviewed draft code



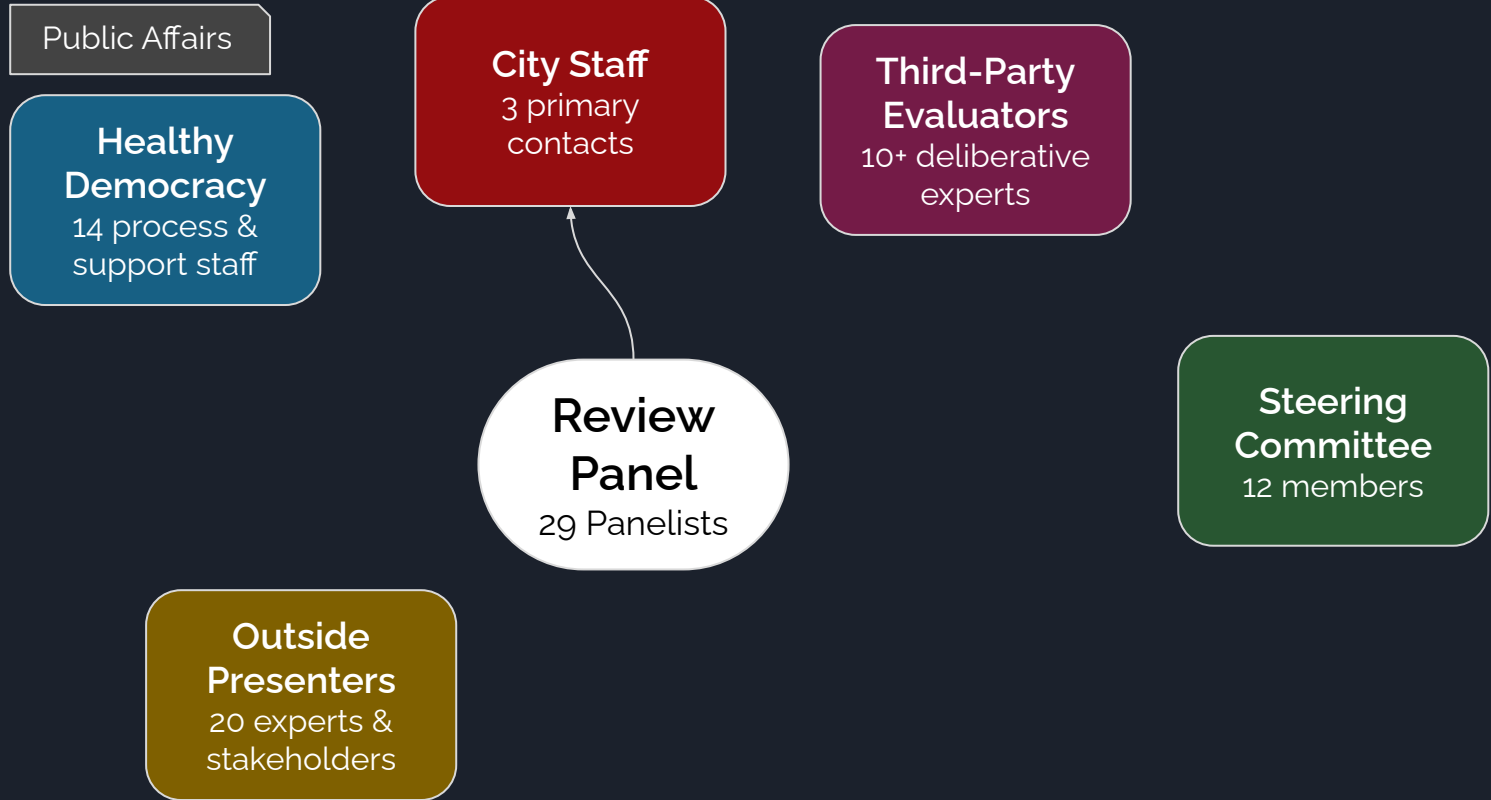
Elements of the Review Panel Process



Support for the Panel



Information **to** the Panel



Recommendations **from** the Panel

Guiding Principles

Principle 1: Affordable housing is of paramount importance.

Weighted Score: 192

Votes: Strongly Agree – 25, Somewhat Agree – 2, Don't Know / Neutral – 0, Disagree – 0.

- Why this is important:
 - Rent is over half a person's income – 60% a lot of the time – so affordability must be a priority.

Principle 38: Provision for continuous improvement of policy; what we create will need to be revisited in the future. Establish a periodic form of review process on existing policy to change accordingly. Form a review process that is at least as representative as this Panel.

Weighted Score: 189

Votes: Strongly Agree – 25, Somewhat Agree – 3, Don't Know / Neutral – 0, Disagree – 0.

- Why this is important:
 - As an example, only three buildings have been built under an existing Eugene policy: MUPTTE (Multi Unit Property Tax Exemption). We should revisit policies after two years and see if it's working.

Principle 6: Expedite the process of securing affordable housing for those that need it most. Reduce red tape.

Weighted Score: 189

Votes: Strongly Agree – 25, Somewhat Agree – 1, Don't Know / Neutral – 1, Disagree – 0.

Principle 2: Maintain affordability for newly constructed middle housing when replacing existing affordable housing structures.

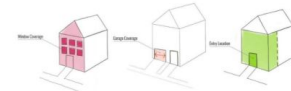
Weighted Score: 185

Votes: Strongly Agree – 23, Somewhat Agree – 2, Don't Know / Neutral – 0, Disagree – 0.

Question 3: Design Standards

Design standards define the look and feel of buildings. In many cases, the City of Eugene currently applies only very basic design standards such as building setbacks (the distance from the edge of the property to the home) and maximum height to homes in the zone(s) that will soon allow more middle housing types. Some design standards promote walking and pedestrian accessibility (having doors to homes face the street or reducing the width of driveways or garage doors).

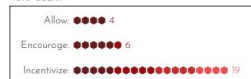
The following are examples of potential design standards. What level of standards should the City use for middle housing?



- ALLOW: Use the highest level of design standards (followed by the state such as the location of doors or entries, the amount of the house covered by windows, and garage widths). Features will more closely match single-family homes, but the standards may limit design flexibility and may add cost to the home.
- ENCOURAGE: Develop design standards that are less restrictive than the "allow" option. Encourages middle housing to include basic design features but leaves more options available for design flexibility and reducing costs.
- INCENTIVIZE: Use very few or no design standards. This permits a wide range of design options for entry locations, garage width, and other factors that may make middle housing stand out more from single-family homes, but has the benefit of greater design flexibility that can result in more efficient, customized, and lower cost housing.

7/31

Vote Count



- Key to Panelist Notes:
- Bold, Italic & Underline** – 1 Group Supported as a Key Point
 - Bold & Italic** – 2 Groups Supported as a Key Point
 - Bold** – 3 Groups Supported as a Key Point
 - No emphasis – 1 Group Supported as a Key Point
 - Additional Notes

Allow Notes	Encourage Notes	Incentivize Notes	General Notes
	Design flexibility	<i>Has to be incentivized - making less restrictive how we design middle housing if gonna make it more affordable</i>	There are no design standards for single dwelling houses
	What to keep some standards leading to development diversification (see Principle 28)	Any design element	• This is not true, there are design standards for SF lex setbacks/building height
	Promote sustainability build for energy efficiency		

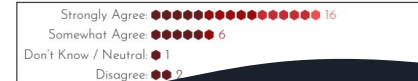
Public Engagement Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Statistical sampling is good to get an idea of what a sample of the population thinks. This kind of selection could also be useful for special committees, Boards, and Commissions.



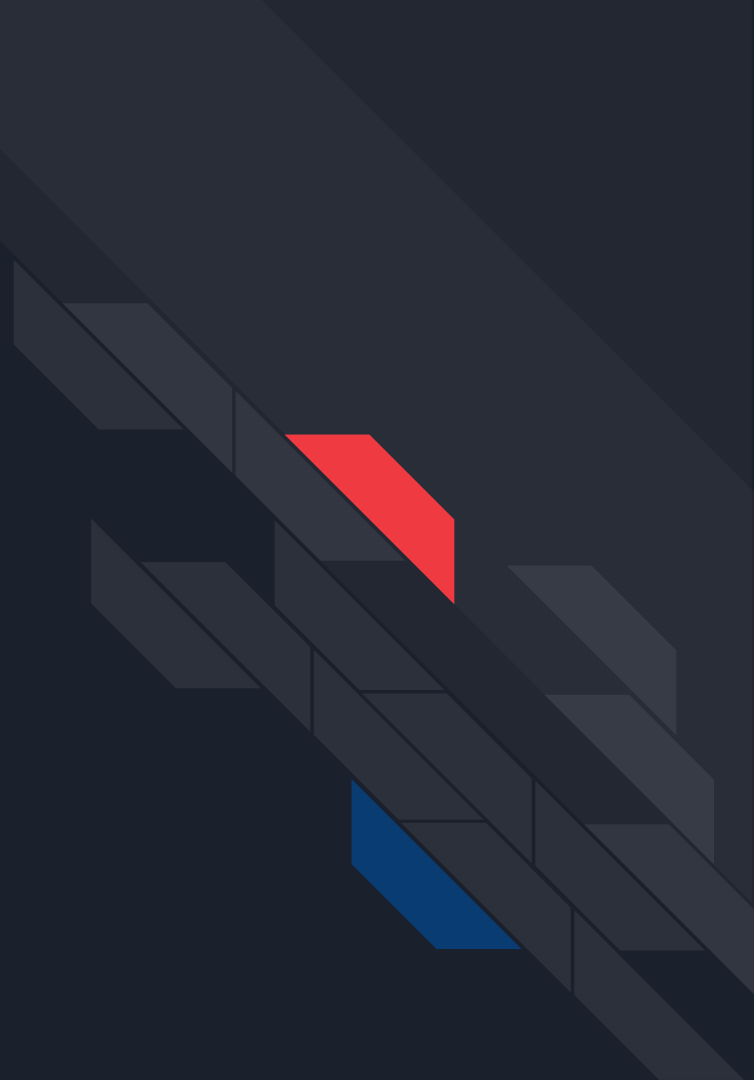
- Rationale:** Random mailings might be more effective than other recruitment methods because they get a hold of people right where they already are - in their homes.
- Rationale:** Not everyone listens to the radio, reads the newspaper, knows the right people, or is on the right listserve to hear about openings and apply.
- Rationale:** In an informal poll, 3 Panelists on the process oversight task committee said they would not have responded to an email or an ad in the Register Guard to join this Panel.

Recommendation 1a: If direct mailings are too expensive, prioritize underrepresented groups. This may require a creative process to find where those folks live.



Deliverables (written by the Panel with no edits from staff)

Other Models



The Basics

- *Scope:* less extensive
 - e.g., City Councilor pay, neighborhood corridor plan
- *Panel:* 20-24 Panelists
- *Cost:* \$35-50,000
- *Info inputs:* 8-12

Other Creative Ideas

- Share a single Panel between multiple small cities in a region, or between multiple agencies
- Opportunities to use pieces of lottery or deliberation
- Local capacity-building

Lottery-deliberation at a **smaller** scale

The Basics

- *Scope*: more extensive
 - e.g., comprehensive plan, neighborhood-based system
- *Panel*: 40-200 Panelists
- *Cost*: \$100-300,000
- *Info inputs*: 30+ presenters, tours, surveys, listening sess., charrette

Two-Tiered Concept

- Lottery-selected Commission: democratize agenda-setting, governance & follow-up
- Commission oversees separate lottery-selected, issue-specific or agency-specific Panels.

Lottery-deliberation at a **larger** scale

Yeah, but . . .





Random People Aren't Experts!

- Random (& representative) groups have legitimacy
- The basis of every Panel is evidence – expert Q&A is the whole first half of the process
- However, all expertise needs interpretation in order to be used to make decisions – the question is only **who** is making that interpretation
- Proven track-record of accuracy
(See healthydemocracy.org/impact)



Anyone Should Be Able to Participate

- Stakeholders are essential to these processes – on steering committees & as advocate witnesses
- Existing advocates aren't always the right deliberators
- We can't all engage on all issues; so, random selection
- Open in theory does not always mean open in practice
 - Traditional public hearings & committees typically feature the same few voices (like mine!)
 - Let's focus on outcomes: Are we actually getting broad-based participation or just allowing for it?



This Seems Expensive

- Investment in permanent civic infrastructure
- Often same cost but higher payoff
- Benefits go beyond recommendations: both for panelists in the room & broader culture of trust
- Consider the quality of decisions
 - Potential long-term savings due to legitimacy and strong process



Isn't This Equality, Not Equity?

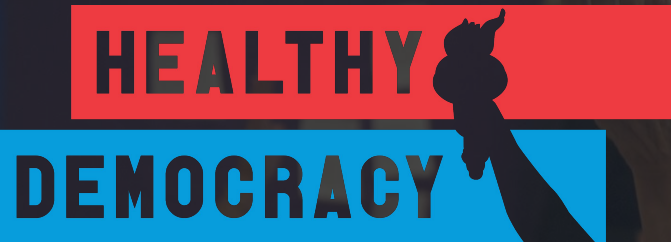
- True. But let's at least start with a baseline of equality
 - Most easily defensive
 - Many of our equity-based processes don't even achieve equality
- When we add an equity lens, we need to justify it
 - Example: K-12 demographics for future planning
 - Certain groups may need particular consideration for certain projects
 - Consider: larger panel & stakeholder integration

“Many of us consider [this process] to be
**our most meaningful
experience in politics.**

And for those of us who have struggled
to keep faith in the political system, it
helped to restore it.

—Joint Statement by 2016 Massachusetts
Citizens' Initiative Review Panelists





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